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September 18, 2008

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"Ike and Gustav left millions of Louisianians without electrical power for days and even weeks, causing the food in their refrigerators to spoil and straining already tight resources," said Rep. Melancon. "The Disaster Food Stamp Program has helped thousands families get back on their feet since the storms, but many of my constituents have been tangled in bureaucratic red tape when trying to get assistance, or denied help altogether."

"Deserving people are not getting the food assistance they need to help them recover from the hit their wallets took during the storms. I am asking the USDA, on their behalf, for an explanation of the policies that are getting in the way."

The letter Rep. Melancon, Sen. Landrieu, and Rep. Cazayoux sent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture requests clarification on various policies, including:

- Income eligibility for the Disaster Food Stamp Program (DRSP) and whether an applicant's recent evacuation expenses are considered in evaluating his or her eligibility.
- Waivers that have been denied to the State of Louisiana following Gustav, but were approved following Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

- Why, specifically, Louisiana's request for a waiver of the face-to-face interview requirement was denied, and whether this waiver has been approved for other disasters.

A copy of the letter can be viewed by [clicking here](#) .

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